

**Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board  
Meeting Minutes  
October 3, 2002  
6 to 9:30 p.m.**

**Jefferson County Airport Terminal Building, 11755 Airport Way, Broomfield**

**FACILITATOR:** Scott Woodard

Jeff Eggleston, the Board's chair, called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

**BOARD / EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT:** Suzanne Allen, Dave Davia, Joe Downey, Jeff Eggleston, Maureen Eldredge, Jim Fabian, Earl Gunia, Kip Harward, Victor Holm, Henri Jonas, Bill Kossack, Tom Marshall, Mary Mattson, Nancy Peters / Steve Gunderson, Joe Legare, Dean Rundle

**BOARD / EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ABSENT:** Anne Fenerty, Tom Gallegos, Shirley Garcia, Jim Kinsinger, LeRoy Moore / Tim Rehder

**PUBLIC / OBSERVERS PRESENT:** John Corsi (KH); Melissa Anderson (RFCLoG); Louise Janson (citizen); Alan Trenary (citizen); Mark Sattelberg (USFWS); Laura Williams (citizen); Deb French (RFCAB staff); Jerry Henderson (RFCAB staff); Ken Korkia (RFCAB staff); Patricia Rice (RFCAB staff)

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:** Deb French, RFCAB staff member, reported on public comment received through the Board's comment line, email, and periodic surveys. First, she discussed the new survey on the web site. In mid-September, staff posted a new survey on the Board's web site at the same time the Fish and Wildlife Service began its scoping process. The survey question first asked citizens to answer whether they believe the public should have access to the site once it becomes a wildlife refuge, and if the answer is yes, to check off a list of activities they feel are suitable for the refuge. Summary results to date were given in a memo to the Board and will be submitted officially to the Fish and Wildlife Service by October 31. Deb then summarized the public comment received by the office about the new survey question.

- A caller from Arvada stated she does not believe the public should have access to a wildlife refuge at all. She said a refuge is for wildlife, not for people.
- Another caller said she believes the public should have access for bike trails and wildlife photography, but she does not believe hunting should be allowed.
- A person from Jefferson County wrote that the Fish and Wildlife Service must manage the wildlife population, including prairie dogs. This person does not want the refuge to serve as a "dumping ground" for unwanted animals.
- A writer from Boulder County would like to see bike trails on the future wildlife refuge and would like to have new trails connect with existing bike trails in the area.

**CONVERSATION WITH NEW DOE SITE MANAGER GENE SCHMITT:** Gene Schmitt attended the Board meeting to introduce himself and talk with Board members. First he talked about his background. He has been in federal service for the past 30 years, until now in Washington, D.C. This is his first field assignment, and he said it has been a challenge to make that adjustment. He has worked in the Environmental Management program since 1993, involved in every aspect of that program over the past 10 years. He was at first reluctant about taking a field assignment until he learned Rocky Flats was an option, because he said he loves Colorado and loves to ski. Gene said he is familiar with advisory boards and how they function, and hopes to attend many more meetings to learn about what is important to the Board. Gene made a commitment to listen to and work closely with the Board.

He stated his priorities are safety, closure, and transition, and that safety always comes first. Gene noted there have been some problems recently, mostly with electrical work, but DOE maintains a close watch over the contractor, Kaiser-Hill. The contractor has many incentives to do work safely, he noted. Gene said the site is making good progress in terms of closure, especially since shipments of plutonium to the Savannah River Site are

**ADMIN RECORD**

SW-A-005385

underway. He hopes to be able to share information on progress of those shipments soon. According to Gene, 41 percent of the closure project is completed, and he said the site hopes to achieve its 50-percent-complete milestone sometime this spring. There are still many challenges and obstacles, but Gene said 2006 is very likely to happen, and achieving completion earlier than December 2006 is also quite possible. He also noted that DOE is now actively working to help find new jobs for the site's federal workers. Some of those workers would be relocated to other sites, but others have expressed interest in remaining in the Denver area.

Board members then spent some time asking questions of Gene and making comments. Those questions and comments focused on concerns about working more aggressively on stewardship issues; pursuing dedicated funding for stewardship activities; addressing worker and community safety; considering the possibility that accelerating work can lead to worker exhaustion and more incidents; and finding ways to funnel cost savings back into other cleanup activities at the site. In addition, Gene was urged to continue an open dialogue with the Board and the community about site issues.

**QUARTERLY UPDATE ON NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ISSUES:** First, Dean Rundle with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) gave a brief report on the status of the agency's public scoping process. In September, FWS held four public scoping meetings. Total attendance at the meetings was just over 90 citizens. The meetings were done in a town hall format, using small groups to discuss issues. FWS used this format because the agency wanted to be educated by the public, rather than to present information to the public. Dean said a broad spectrum of comments was received from those in attendance. The scoping period ends on October 31 and Dean encouraged the board, either as a group or individually, to provide comments to the Service. He also noted that this would not be the last time for the public to comment. FWS will prepare a report based on all the public comments received through October 31. He also said that FWS would like to hear comments about the Service's draft vision and goal statements, which can be found on their web site at <http://rockyflats.fws.gov/>. Those documents are crucial to an upcoming planning phase – the development of alternatives. Dean noted the next phase in the process is to develop six different focus groups consisting of subject matter experts, who will be invited to be on each group and discuss some of the issues identified during the scoping process. Those focus groups will be open to the public for observance rather than active participation.

Next, Dave Clarkson with the Colorado Division of Wildlife (DOW) gave a presentation on the state's efforts to identify and combat Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), a disease that affects the state's deer and elk populations. Animals with the disease have been found in an area north and west of Fort Collins, stretching into Wyoming. But some infected animals have been found in areas south of Rocky Flats. CWD is a prion disease, similar to what is known as "Mad Cow Disease." Prion is a protein in the normal cell structure of mammals, which becomes mutated by this disease. Once it mutates, it can also affect neighboring cells and the nervous system. Incubation can be anywhere from 18 months to five years. However, once an animal has symptoms of the disease, progression is rapid. The disease seems to be transmitted between animals, rather than through airborne pathways or via insects. There has been no indication so far that the disease has been transmitted to animals other than elk or deer, or that there is a health hazard to humans. The Division of Wildlife is monitoring animals with the help of hunters who, during hunting season, will submit the heads of animals they kill for testing. DOW also performs tests on road kill that is discovered. The Division will reduce the population of deer and elk in areas showing the highest number of infected animals. They depopulate the species by approximately 50 percent, and then hold herds at that level while more monitoring is performed. The density of the animal population may play a role in the spread of the disease. In addition, the disease is carried when animals migrate from high population areas into subgroups. Natural selection is not considered to be enough to stop the spread of the disease. DOW believes they have an obligation to contain the disease, since projections indicate the disease may quadruple within the next 30 years without intervention.

The Division will survey around 25 animals at Rocky Flats in a "taking" of deer that will occur on October 6. (Note: The taking did not occur because of legal issues between DOE and the state over liability.) Those deer will be euthanized and then tested for Chronic Wasting Disease. Because there is interest in also testing the deer for contamination from activities at Rocky Flats, the Fish and Wildlife Service will preserve samples from the deer. FWS does not have funds at this time to test the samples, but the samples will remain frozen for testing at a later date. Some testing for radioactive contamination was performed in the 1990s, and FWS will first research to find out if previous tests provide adequate information. If not, the Service will work on acquiring funding to test the

samples taken on October 6.

**END-STATE DISCUSSION – SUBSURFACE SOIL ISSUES:** Similar to last month's meeting, the Board held a round robin discussion focused on a set of discussion questions, this time addressing subsurface soil issues. The questions were identified by the Board at its September retreat as being crucial to building consensus on the subsurface strategy. Following are three key questions the Board considered:

1. Is DOE's proposed strategy for subsurface plutonium and americium contamination acceptable to you? Why or why not? What alternatives or adjustments might you propose that would make it more acceptable?
2. What questions or concerns do you have, if any, about the characterization strategy that has been proposed? What changes would you propose?
3. What are your concerns regarding the approach to non-radionuclide contaminants? What changes would you propose?

Board members discussed the following ideas and comments during separate round robin sessions:

Regarding Questions 1 and 2:

- Agree with the idea of putting more effort into surface and less into subsurface, but not satisfied with the proposal for subsurface cleanup because not enough characterization has been done. The site doesn't see a pathway, but we should consider future erosion that could take place, expose areas, and potentially create pathways.
- Don't have a problem with the surface, but have a problem with the site's plan for old process waste lines.
- Concerned about the level and type of characterization, is it adequate? There are just too many unknowns.
- Don't feel there are enough answers yet. Would like assurance of ongoing discussions, comment, and input on problem areas in the future.
- Old process waste lines are a problem. What if contamination migrates? Many of these issues have not been answered.
- Like the proposal for removing lines in the top three feet. Share concerns about the lack of characterization. Lines three to six feet deep will not have adequate characterization. Some of the contamination in the subsurface could eventually be brought to the surface. Human activities are not being considered.
- Concerned about the justification for artificial depths being considered as a cut-off. There is no justification about why those numbers have been selected. Lack of characterization is a definite problem. Is the assumption that the site is clean, or is the assumption that it is dirty?
- Concerned about depth to which contamination will be chased. Concerned about exposure pathways being considered. It's important to consider adverse conditions. Need to use a consistent unit of measure (nanocuries vs. picocuries). Six feet of depth seems arbitrary. Also have concerns about the lack of characterization.
- It's important for the community to follow-up, and stewardship is important. Do what we can today knowing what we know and leave a plan for the future to address some or all of the problems.
- Concerned about the characterization. A much better job could be done with characterizing in three dimensions. A good statistically based characterization program would help.
- No way of knowing how much of the subsurface may be brought to the surface over a period of time, due to natural disasters or other occurrences. The characterization plan needs work.
- Concerned with the three to six foot layer, and concerned about the level of 3000 pCi/g. Also, the reference to 80 square meters is large, why not a smaller area? To reduce the amount of characterization you have to do, just remove the old process waste lines above six feet.
- Concerned about the expense and trouble if the areas have erosion problems. Also, 80 square meters is much too large of an area.

- Concerned about the analysis that has been done.
- Concerned about terminology being used.
- Would rather see the lines removed than to see them filled with foam. Need to consider the life expectancy of the waste lines being left in place.
- Better erosion modeling should be done at the site.
- Some of the waste lines don't present a hazard because of what they carried but others do, and it is generally known which lines they are. Those lines should just be removed and not waste time on characterization.
- Also concerned about under building contamination, and leaving excessive contamination in place with slabs.

Regarding Question 3:

- Concerned about the depth issue here as well, and again no commitment below three feet. Need legally enforceable controls.
- Many compounds are water-soluble and could end up in the drinking water supply.
- Surface water standards will dictate what will be done with these contaminants or compounds. Will need to do a certain level of cleanup to maintain surface water standards. The site will be much drier in the future. More concerned about these contaminants than the radioactive contaminants.
- Want to be sure that anything mobile under the surface is not moving into the water supply.
- A much different situation because these are water-soluble and mobile materials.
- Uranium is an alpha emitter like plutonium, an inhalation/ingestion problem, uranium is as dangerous as plutonium.
- As long as water quality standards stay the same, these should be okay.
- Would like to make sure the groundwater and surface water standards are continually met. What about the compounds we need to worry about that may not be water-soluble?
- Would prefer to see this based on risk to a potential future resident. Not confident in institutional controls that provide this will be a refuge forever. Need to address long-term stewardship.

In summary, Board members agreed that although surface soil contamination does present an immediate hazard, they have real concerns about the site's characterization – or lack of characterization – for subsurface contamination. The Board also expressed concerns about erosion problems in the future; characterization of the Old Process Waste Lines (OPWLs); removing waste lines rather than leaving them in place, especially those where any leaks have been detected or are suspected; filling the lines with foam and other problems that strategy may cause; and that units of measurement cited are not consistent. Generally it seemed as though the Board feels there are too many unknowns, that more characterization is necessary, and that a better rationale of the assumptions behind the strategy are required. For instance, the depths selected for remediation seem to be arbitrary and without justification, and more exposure pathways may exist but have not been addressed. Concerns were expressed that there seem to be basic differences between DOE and the Board about site assumptions, and that institutional controls are not in place and are not enforceable. Board members also felt that conversations must continue over time, and that more clarity in the language used is crucial.

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD ON SUBSURFACE SOIL ISSUES:** No comments were received.

**END-STATE DISCUSSION – NEXT STEPS:** Ken discussed a proposed outline for the Board's comments and recommendations on modifications to Rocky Flats Cleanup Agreement Attachments 5 and 10. A first draft of language on surface soil is in the works; Board members have put together some comments and another draft will be brought to the Board for review in November. The Board's Closure Projects Committee (formerly the Environmental Restoration Committee) will meet on October 8, and that committee will draft recommendation language on DOE's proposed water quality data interpretation change; that language will also be reviewed in November. Staff has started to develop language on long-term stewardship based on input received from the Board at its September retreat. Again, the first draft of recommendation language will be reviewed on November

7. A small group of Board members will work on other recommendation language related to subsurface soil, site budget, trade-offs, and risks. The plan is to have a "first reading" of the recommendation in November, and a "final reading" and approval of the recommendation at the Board's December meeting.

**APPROVAL OF 2003 WORK PLAN AND BUDGET:** The Board approved its 2003 work plan and the corresponding budget for that work. The Board will organize its work and discussions into two major focus areas: 1) planning and implementation of activities to prepare the site for closure by 2006; and 2) exploring the range of policy and planning issues related to the site condition after 2006. To coordinate these discussions, the Board will form a Closure Projects Committee, which will address planning and implementation of environmental restoration projects, decontamination and demolition of buildings, processing and shipment of nuclear materials and wastes, and site studies. The Board will also continue the activities of the newly formed Wildlife Refuge Technical Review Group, which investigates and discusses all aspects of planning for the Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge. Issues the Board will discuss as a group are continued end-state discussions focusing on broader policy issues such as long-term stewardship, water management, and final site configuration. To address other topics, the Board will receive regular quarterly updates on natural resource management issues, the site's closure progress, and worker safety. The Board also plans to continue with an extensive public outreach program, to contract for independent review of site issues or documents, and will maintain its active involvement with the activities of the Environmental Management Site Specific Advisory Board (EMSSAB). In 2003, the Board will continue to serve as a pass-through agent for the ComRad program. The Board's proposed budget for 2003 is \$552,694, of which \$150,000 is devoted solely to the ComRad Program and \$402,694 is budgeted for RFCAB activities.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** The Membership Committee recommended, and the Board approved, the addition of a new member, Andrew Ross. An Arvada resident, Andrew is a water quality specialist with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. He has expertise in Colorado water quality laws and regulations and a working knowledge of other state and federal environmental programs and regulations. Andrew has a BS in Geological Engineering and an MS in Geology. He also serves on the Arvada Light Rail Committee and the First Judicial District Advisory Board. Andrew will serve on the Board as a community representative.

**NEXT MEETING:**

*Date: November 7, 2002, 6 to 9:30 p.m.*

*Location: Jefferson County Airport Terminal Building, Mount Evans Room, 11755 Airport Way, Broomfield*

*Agenda: Update on site closure progress; discuss end-state strategy for surface water; review draft recommendation language on surface soil, subsurface soil, and long-term stewardship*

**MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:55 p.m. \***

(\* Taped transcript of full meeting is available in the RFCAB office.)

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Shirley Garcia, Secretary  
Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board

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The Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board is a community advisory group that reviews and provides recommendations on cleanup plans for Rocky Flats, a former nuclear weapons plant outside of Denver, Colorado.

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